

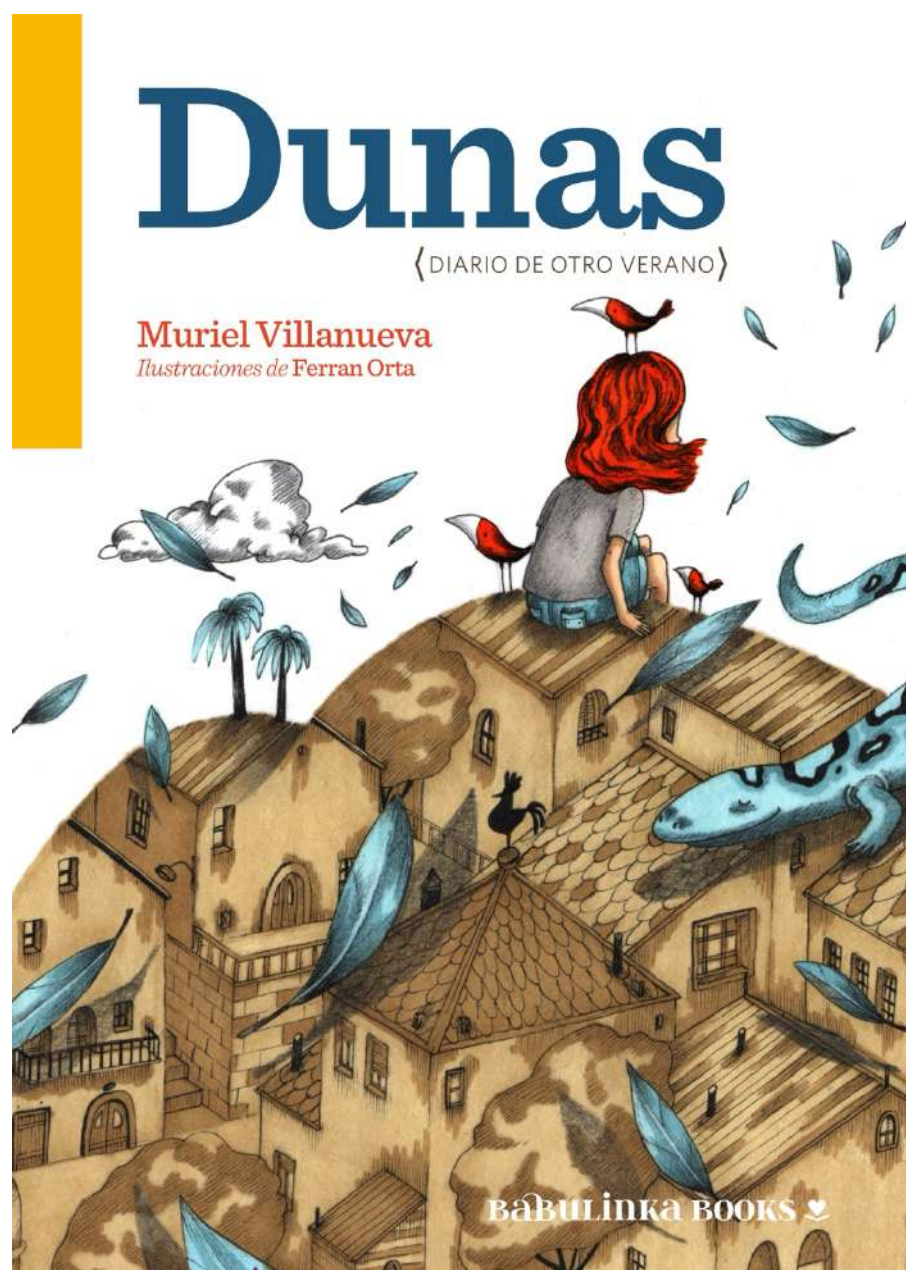
DUNAS (DIARY OF ANOTHER SUMMER)

Pages 7-44 of *Dunas: diari d'un altre estiu* by Muriel Villanueva.

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ENGLISH SAMPLE TRANSLATION

For sample use only.



July 31th

I really want to go away from here. To put on headphones in the ears and the cable loose in the pocket, in the middle silence, and walk to the outskirts, until Vellescut becomes a forest.

Could it be the full moon that upsets us? It's impressive-nante how it shines tonight. Now everyone is sleeping and I could write on the windowsill, alone illuminated by its whitish clarity.

But no, it's not the moon. When we all get together, We get upset.

And I can't stand too much these days when There are six of us at home.

This afternoon it was time to pack suitcases: open drawers, bags on the floor, piles of junk that we will carry to the town and we will not use urgent laundry, screams that pass through doors and walls, "Has anyone seen my bikini?", "There's no toothpaste left!", taking turns showering at the last minute, mom and Manuel doing cuddling in the middle of the hallway, Gala Galleta screaming «I'm going down to the store to buy more of my cookies! before they close until September!", Lía Literata stacking romantic novels, essays on spirituality ity and French manuals, and Lucas Lunatico crying because it seems that his favorite inflatable is punctured: "Wow, I won't be able to take my dolphin to the beach!" What a family of nuts! As if I didn't have enough with two sisters (the list that is being made) smarter and the funny one who grows and loses

grace), now they foist on us Manuel's son, a little guy just graduated from first grade, a sugary savvy.

It's still hard for me to use the word family.

But I better start getting used to it. Now

It's time to spend a month in Dunas, the six of us together, at home Grandpa's, super tight.

I don't like him at all, Manuel. For example,

about writing a diary, which was his idea when he was my

teacher, I ended up liking it. Now I do it often,

without forcing myself to do it every day, and I like it a lot. But

If Max exists, we could say that this

notebook (number ten now) is my best friend.

But I don't like Manuel (or even halfway).

It means that I love him as a father. I already had a

father. I loved him a lot, he loved me a lot, and then he

He died suddenly and I was devastated. Don't have

I want to have another father. I have a mother who goes from

perfect, I have a grandfather with hair who snores, I have

a sister who is wonderful and another who is very cuddly,

and I love them with a certain enthusiasm (when they let themselves want). They me too, of course (when they let me).

I have enough with that. More than enough.

Luckily, Max called in the evening. How good

It's a shame to hear his voice. Because my mother is so "cool" that

He still doesn't let me have a cell phone, he calls me on my landline house and I lock myself with the phone in my room.

Your call reminded me that I still had to

put the stone that summer gave me in my suitcase

when we met; he painted on it the views that

we have from the abandoned car: sea, sand,

rocks and palm trees accompany the four letters of
my name While I was putting it away, Max blurted out to me:
«This year I don't feel like it, Duna». So, plop! The stone
It fell out of my hand, onto the badly folded clothes.
What my friend means (I feared it) is that no
He wants to spend another summer in Dunas. And I'm not going to
ask why, because I already know, I already understand.
My breasts are not very big, but it has been a
year I kept my promise. It was last summer,
inside the water of a small dune cove, and
When I remember it I still blush. I had promised him
I thought that when our breasts grew we would look
mine and we would talk about it. And there we were, I
only with her bikini bottoms, with her bra on her
hand, he was in a swimsuit and a T-shirt, and he approached me and
He gave a kiss on the lips, very short and wet with salt, and
He diverted his gray gaze towards our feet, which looked
deformed at the bottom of the water. Then he dropped a
«Thank you» shyly and then he said: «I don't know why I say
Thanks, sorry, I'm nervous. And I wanted to
pissing myself with laughter, and with nerves, I wanted to piss and
warm the cold sea with my pee, but I held on
both laughter and peeing out of respect for Max and his skin
so fine, so dark, so everything.
As much as I think about it, I don't know what Max and I are.
From time to time we give each other a kiss, but the thing
it doesn't go from there. He remains closed-shouldered, I continue
writing, he continues biting his nails, I continue
drawing, he continues playing the ocarina looking at the
infinite, I keep getting stuck with his profile
charming backlit while he copies phrases and operas

rations from the class blackboard.

«I already have tits, Duna, do you hear me?» The voice of Max has brought me back to the present of my room, to the warmth of the telephone receiver against my ear. «I already HE. And, don't worry, no one is going to make any start. tario", I told him as if to calm his heart restless. And he: «How do I set it up to bathe in the beach, huh? I have to wear a girdle all winter and now... what? "Do I swim in the sea in a T-shirt?" To the Hearing that, I lay down lengthwise on the unmade bed. My breasts hurt every time I imagine the girdle that hides Max's shapes. (Well he calls girdle to some very tight tank tops that They sell for kids like him.) I touch them, I press them Inside, I close my eyes. I think that her breasts They are as natural as mine, but yours They bother him more. I think it's shit that stops To be a girl you have to have and to be a boy you have to what not to have. Where is that written? And what could Should I tell him to calm him down? Max always kicks me out above an avalanche of questions that I try to silence so as not to go where they don't call me. I had been wondering about all this for a while, looking at to the ceiling, when he let me go, almost without breathing, I that I had already known for months: "And worst of all, Duna, I already have my period. Can you believe it? I, with the rule. I thought that would never happen to me, but one day, suddenly, boom!, a red spot on the underpants. And I had a crazy desire to tell my father: "Hey, take me to the hospital and stop this now." same, that they give me pills, that they operate on me, that they

make a man forever!" And now I think that I
"We will have it during the first week of August."
He hadn't told me, but I had sensed it from
that disgusted look he had the day I had to
ask all the classmates about the class
If anyone could leave me a compress. But remember
how he had been when I had had the
first rule and the delicacy with which Lía had
treated, and I decided to wait for him to tell me when
I would like, when the shame or anger passes
or whatever. I stayed listening from outside
squeezes his heart, without saying anything.
"Thank you for explaining it to me," I said, drawing
a smile that she knew he could see only by listening.
Chasing me "You already imagined it, right?" he told me.
asked with a weak voice. "Of course. From
November of last year," I told him. "Because
You're so smart, huh? Can't I have secrets from you
or what?" He was already talking to me louder and half laughing. "No
"I'm smart, Max," I concluded, pretending that all of this
I also found it funny. And I wanted to add: "It's just
"that I love you and that when I look at you I see you inside,"
but I have kept it to myself.
I have kept quiet about it because, when I think about
doesn't feel like spending the summer in Dunas, when
I think that not even my presence gets them to enter
desire, I feel like a giant tear swallows me and
a silent suffocation comes over me.
So that: tomorrow we are going to Dunas in
complete great family plan, but Max,

that will arrive two days later, he does not feel like com-
starting our super summer.

August 1st

It's nice to see Grandpa Ignacio so full of everything: light,
of joy, of life in general.

The blue box in which we keep photos, letters and
Grandma's diary pages still on the shelf
of honor of the little room, and now it has a finger of dust,
good sign. It even seems to me that grandpa has left us
gained a little weight, enough to integrate the belly
in the body, so that it does not stick out like half a ball
ahead of his thinness. It has changed, yes, in this pair
of years, since we swept the carpet from the attic
erases from the erasers with which he tried to erase the memories.
two from his wife. Now he talks about her with a nostalgia
sweet that no longer stings or saddens anyone. And added-
I think I thought I saw a golden spark in
his black eyes when, while unpacking,
Mom asked him how the knitting course was going
has been doing at the yarn store.

What has also changed, a lot, is the town.

In the car, shortly before arriving, seeing the road-
paved and widened road, Gala has said: «Wow, what a
"cool", but Lía, who was the co-pilot, looked up
of the story in French that I had in my lap, it made me
looked in the rearview mirror and raised an eyebrow: bad thing.
We have hardly recognized the parking lot, which before
It was a simple open field on the outskirts of the town;
They have paved it and divided it into squares painted on the

ground, and it was packed like never before with cars, most of them new and shiny, many of them outsiders. Mother has parked and helped Manuel find another Free space for your van. Then they started to comment among themselves I-don't-know-what about the new mayor and I have realized the panorama and I have swallowed it questions like "Have they dared to pave the square?" or "Have they taken our rusty car? or "They won't be able to dirty the sea, right?"... But the questions tasted like asphalt steaming and they stuck to my tongue and I preferred observe and not get distressed ahead of time. Going down to grandpa's house, dragging male After six, my heart has fallen to my feet. I don't know realize that the white facades, the roofs Oranges and the blue sea do not match with the shiny black. you from the asphalt? I could still smell the stench of the dense freshly spread tar. Yuck! And I couldn't help it. I have left the suitcase in the door of the house, I have given a kiss and a hug to grandfather and I ran towards the square. Along the way I have ran into Vicenta, the one from the wool store, who told me greeted with a smile wide as a boat, a smile that I had never seen since he settled in the town four or five years ago. Afterwards, since the descent, the awnings of the stalls could already be seen of the weekly market and I immediately guessed that the cobblestone was still there around the fountain: the rosette of round, white and gray stones. Phew! Me I have been left with an expression probably you idiot drawn on your face, happy that at least the

town center remains intact: church, school, center
doctor and town hall, all as is.

Suddenly, the palm of a pale, fleshy hand
has appeared before me, as if trying to wake up-
me. «Hey, Duna, have you arrived yet?» I have recognized in
Emilio's voice followed, his voice half spongy, half
slippery I blinked and smiled at him, I think, or
at least a little, without looking at him yet: "Uh, hello," I said.
saying. "All good? "You make a face like a sole," he said.
do, without laughing or anything, almost worried. I have explained
that I had been scared when I saw so much asphalt in the town and
who had come down to check how the square was.

And so, yes, I have looked at it. A lock has been removed
of hair in front of the eyes (it has not been cut in
years and I doubt that he has combed them) and he told me: "It's
shit all this. And wait." I have not understood what
I wanted to say "And wait," but I preferred not to ask.
tar. He lives in the town and must know things that more
It is worth not having to discover in a single slap; I'm
on vacation and I don't want to get depressed on the first day.
And, furthermore, I was half hanging on his eyes
honey-colored, now freed from the spiked feline mane
blondes who threaten me with I-don't-know-what without warning.
Oh, oh, oh. Problems, problems, problems.

This summer is starting out crooked, but very crooked.

If I see it coming, I'm going to sleep without dinner.

I can't see it well even if I have one eye.

of each color.

Couldn't they have given us two days of rest,

two days to enjoy the holidays, before

drop this bomb on us?

Mom and Manuel are experts at ruining things.

best evenings

The first thing they told us is that in September
bre (tachán-tachán!) Manuel moves to our house
permanently and the Lunatic will come to sleep
three days a week. Relief! The three sisters

We looked with that expression that redheads see

It suits us so well: sweet potato pasta face. Of all

Anyway, the one who has it worst is super Gala Galleta, who

You will have to share a room. Until now the child,

When he came to sleep, he slept on the couch. But

now they will buy him a bed with folding legs for

keep it under my sister's bed.

Well, wasn't that enough for them?

Well no. Apparently not. They didn't have enough.

It wasn't enough for them to roll up like a "roll of
summer" that they had to fall in love. They didn't have enough

so much about falling in love that my super heavy ex-teacher

He will come to settle at home on September 1st. No

They had enough with the fact that they are going to live together

who goes and it turns out that they want to put their immature son

ro and glutton under our poor Gala's bed. And not

They had enough to foist us on Lucas Lunatico three

days a week that now...

I can't even write it.

We were having dinner on the patio behind the

kitchen, where the grandfather had set a precious table-

sa, and I couldn't even finish the dessert. I almost couldn't

nor swallow the piece of strawberry that was in my mouth.

Lía's expression has changed little by little and I don't know

where did you get the inspiration to show a son-

sincere laughter «Ayyy, how happy I am, congratulations!
daaaades," he said, and got up to hug them and
give them kisses Mom was drooling.

Lucas let himself be hugged by his grandfather, who said
who had just gained a grandson, and started applauding.
say imitating seals when they are happy.

Gala has spit out the milk that was lying around on the tablecloth.
about to be swallowed The words didn't come out, but with
The look said it all: «I flatly refuse,
roundly!".

And luckily, the idea has come to mind.

phrase that my grandmother told me: «Look carefully at what
What your body does when you get angry, Duna, and try
stop it." So I haven't picked up the bowl full of strawberries,
I haven't raised it above our heads
and I haven't slammed it against the patio wall.

I simply got up and said: "Excuse me,
I'm very sleepy".

Nobody has tried to stop me.

Once inside the house, I took from the shelf of honor
the blue box where we keep the unforgettable memories
Grandma's words and I went up to the room. I have
I spent about an hour drawing the box on my pad
in pencil (perspective, shadows, details and defects of
the wood...), thinking about the love between grandparents,
In the fifty infinite years of true love and
well directed, of love well placed in the world, of
love with meaning.

A love like dad for mom. Indelible.

Eternal. Because you will never have time or reasons
to finish.

A love like that, yes, and not this invention that mom and Manuel insists on dressing up and decorating.

The drawing turned out pretty and when I finished it I already I had removed the knot from my stomach.

I haven't opened the box. That's grandpa's thing and he She prefers to be covered in dust and that's fine with me.

Now Gala cries locked in the bathroom. «If I

"You put this monkey in the room at home," he said.

threatened my little sister, "I will go on strike hungry and... I mean... I'll only eat cookies!

"With lots of sugar!" He has taken the packet of cookies.

tas and has locked himself in to continue eating. Although has turned ten years old, sometimes he has attitudes of tadpole

Downstairs, they toast in silence, because we are two missing.

And here I am, with Negro curled up at the feet of the bed, trying to record in my diary the fact that has spoiled my digestion of dinner.

I breathe and write it, that's it, that's it: mom and Manuel they get married

Mom and Manuel will get married in Dunas next day thirty. In front of the sea. Between the dunes. Between my dunes

Where will dad watch it from? Am I the only one who thinks about him?

I need you, Max.